

Performance & Exhibition

Arts Integration

Arts Education

The article explores the significance of performance and exhibition in arts education, emphasizing their role in fostering creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration among students. It highlights the value of providing opportunities for students to showcase their artistic achievements through performances and exhibitions, facilitating meaningful learning experiences and promoting a deeper appreciation for the arts.

The Fourth Studio Structure

In the second edition of *Studio Thinking 2: The Real Benefits of Visual Arts Education*, 2nd Edition, the authors added exhibition as a fourth structure. The first three structures - lecture/demonstration, students-at-work, and critique – are focused on the process of art making. The fourth structure extends the students' experience to include exhibitions that show their work as professional artists do, e.g. gallery openings, gallery representation, site-specific public art installations, etc. To include the performance arts, we refer to this structure as Performance and Exhibition. This structure is the summative assessment for the arts experience. Assessment indicators from the art form can be applied.

Exhibition and performance includes selecting, organizing, and publicly displaying works and/or images and related text. It is the summative assessment to demonstrate what students learned. It can involve any or all of the other three studio structures as the works can be presented in lecture, or students can write about it or create other work inspired from it and students can talk about the work in critique and reflection. The presentation of the work can take many forms, either physical or virtual, installed or performed, ephemeral or permanent, sanctioned or guerrilla, informal or formal, or curated gallery style. It often occurs outside of class space and time, including in virtual spaces and develops in phases: planning, installation, exhibition, and aftermath.

Performance and exhibition skills begin in the classroom as students practice performing and presenting for each other as they are developing skills; thus, performances or exhibitions may be produced on a large or small scale.

Exhibitions and performances contribute in varied ways:

- Provide a forum for student work that bears a family resemblance to how professionals' share their products
- Provide students opportunities to present their work for feedback
- Raise awareness of social or community issues
- Create unity within the community
- Provide contexts to redefine excellence
- Motivate student artists to continue to create
- Recognize student growth and assess student skills in the arts

Additionally, the aesthetic experience for audiences is a powerful complement to the work itself. Our experience has shown that regular high-quality exhibitions and performances transform a school culture in ways that impact learning across grade levels and disciplines.

School-Sponsored Performance and Exhibition

Some schools have developed calendars for arts nights, arts galas, arts festivals, etc., enlisting the support of parent and community groups, PTAs, and arts advisory boards to help stage and manage large scale events. Others have relied on smaller exhibitions throughout the year.

Dance

Dance performances may be performed by one class, several classes, or multiple grade levels. They could be a variety of small groups from various classes and grade levels. The performance may feature students' original choreography or repertoire set on them by a teaching artist or guest choreographer. It may be a performance of learning in the classroom and/or students ability to express themselves through movement with flexibility, coordination, agility, and strength.

Dance performances could be designed for and presented in hallways, kivas, large multi-use spaces, etc., but they could also incorporate site-specific choices that use the school grounds as the venue (e.g., climbing areas, sports courts, walkways, etc.). The dance performance may be accompanied with student narration or video introductions for each piece. The performance space may include a set, lights, audio/visual elements, and costumes to support the purpose of the performance.

Film & Media Arts

Exhibitions of films and digital projects (e.g., animation, Claymation, motion-graphics, etc.) could be small scale (i.e., shown on classroom TVs), or large scale (i.e., projected onto large screens in multi-use spaces for large audiences). If a local arts organization supports a film series, school projects could be shown as part of the programming (e.g., before screening the main film of the evening).

A question and answer period after a showing of digital art such as film or photography is common in the professional media arts exhibits. Consider how you could set up the space or experience for students, parents, and community members to enjoy viewing student work and interacting with them as artists?

Theatre

Drama performances could be a rehearsed product of a process drama experience that occurred in the classroom, a retelling of a story or children's book, a reader's theater, or scripted play/musical. The performance may include a set, costumes, microphones for project young voices, and lighting equipment.

Performances of theatre work could be designed for production in a classroom emptied of chairs and desks for small audiences, in site specific settings (e.g., a performance that used a second floor window for the wizard's castle, a lower level loading dock for the home of dwarves and trolls, jungle gyms for urban dwellings, hallways, etc. - a moveable performance where the audience travels to experience certain scenes), as well as in multi-use spaces (i.e., a cafetorium, gym, kiva). It might also be possible to partner with an area theatre to perform work on their stage, thus making use of stage curtains, legs, lighting, and sound equipment.

Music

Performances could be small (e.g., a touring group of soloists or a small ensemble traveling to various classrooms, or classrooms traveling one by one to a host classroom for the performance), or larger scale (e.g., performed in a multi-use space, gym, or theatre). A caveat: the larger the space, the larger the audience, the more demanding the requirements for sound enhancement. Performances could also be showcases of recorded musical works shot with two or more cameras and subsequently edited into a short film that is shown large or small.

Visual Arts

Exhibitions of 2D art (e.g., paintings, drawings, collage, digital compositions, graphic novels, etc.) could take place in the classroom, in hallways or commons areas, media rooms, etc. The mentor/teacher could serve as the curator, or, students could be assigned curatorial tasks (e.g., matting and/or framing art work; planning the scope and scale of the exhibition to maximize aesthetic efficacy; soliciting, editing, and integrating artist statements as part of the exhibition; designing simple but effective lighting for the exhibition; announcing the "opening" through school websites, postcards, flyers, etc.).

Exhibitions of 3D art could take the shape of a sculpture gallery leading into the school, exhibited along well-traveled walkways, on playgrounds, at strategic places inside the school that don't bend requirements of fire codes, etc. Both 2D and 3D art could be digitally photographed and sequenced into a media project (with voice overs and music) that could be shown in the school's multi-use space for large audiences. Or, a gallery stroll could be designed to host one class at a time with students serving as docents of their work.

Production Guides for Elementary Performances and Exhibitions

For a guide to help you produce your first elementary school performance exhibition, click the links below for a blog post and related eBook to support your goals.

How to Produce a Performance

["Producing School Performances: A Guide for Elementary School Teachers"](#) is a blog article that explores the multifaceted aspects of planning, organizing, and executing successful school performances and exhibitions. It emphasizes the importance of purpose, venue selection, audience engagement, preparation, and post-event reflection.

For more detailed information, read our eBook, "Producing Performances." This resource, along with the blogpost linked above, guides you through a series of questions and considerations when planning and executing your performance event.

How to Produce an Exhibition

Read our blog article titled "[How to Produce Student Exhibitions](#)" for a detailed description of what to consider and how to create a visual arts exhibition for your students or school community.

Read about the other three Studio Structures for Learning:

- [Demonstration-Lecture](#)
- [Students-at-Work](#)
- [Critique & Reflect](#)



This content is provided to you freely by BYU Open Learning Network.

Access it online or download it at

https://open.byu.edu/advancingartsleadership/performance_exhibition.